



Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 21 March 2008

Current Nationwide



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- According to the Star-Telegram, a fire near two crucial south Texas power plants prompted an emergency advisory Wednesday by operators of the state's power grid, who also had to quickly get assistance from Mexico to guard against blackouts. (See item [1](#))
- WYFF 4 Greenville reports an apparent problem with an air duct caused smoke to pour into the cabin of a Delta passenger plane on Wednesday afternoon, causing some terrifying moments for passengers and forcing the plane to make an emergency landing in the Upstate South Carolina. (See item [15](#))

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Energy Sector

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: **Physical**: ELEVATED, **Cyber**: ELEVATED

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) – <http://www.esisac.com>]

1. *March 20, Star-Telegram.com* – (Texas) **Emergency causes state grid to draw power from Mexico.** A fire near two crucial south Texas power plants prompted an emergency advisory Wednesday by operators of the state's power grid, who also had to quickly get assistance from Mexico to guard against blackouts. The Electric Reliability Council of Texas used a special conduit to Mexico's Comisión Federal de Electricidad to replace lost power after two Laredo plants were suddenly shut down. What prompted Wednesday's emergency was a grass fire that erupted near a fuel-storage facility that sits adjacent to the Rio Grande. The grass fire forced a shutdown at the gas-storage facility, and the plants no longer had fuel to operate. Their shutdown came just as part of the

transmission grid in Laredo was already off-line for scheduled maintenance. The combination of those factors prompted an order for power from the government-owned Mexican power company, and about 60 megawatts flowed in for several hours. Several other fires caused by dry weather occurred around Texas. A wildfire in the Rio Grande Valley spread to about 25,000 acres in Hidalgo County early Wednesday. Officials pinpointed a fallen power line as the source of the blaze. In King County, about 125 oil wells owned by Hunt Oil were inoperable after wildfires damaged power lines Tuesday. Power had been restored to about 75 percent of those wells by Wednesday. About a third of Texas remains on watch for wildfires. Forecasters with the Texas Forest Service are focused on three regions: south Texas between Corpus Christi, Brownsville, and Laredo; far west Texas; and the Panhandle.

Source: <http://www.star-telegram.com/business/story/538517.html>

See also:

<http://www.statesman.com/news/content/news/stories/local/03/20/0320texfire.html>

2. *March 20, Palm Beach Post* – (Florida) **Federal agency to probe FPL's blackout.** The federal government is joining a formal investigation into the February 26 blackout that left about two million Floridians without power. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission voted Wednesday to work alongside the North America Electric Reliability Corp. and the Florida Reliability Coordinating Council to determine if Florida Power & Light Co. violated federal standards. The size and scope of the blackout convinced the federal commission to get involved. "The Florida blackout was a significant event that affected millions of Florida residents. One localized event affected multiple transmission lines and generators," said the commission chairman in a statement. "We must now determine whether the Florida blackout was related to violations of the standards and to apply any lessons we learn to improve the system." Depending on what they find, the agencies could penalize FPL with fines of up to \$1 million per violation.

Source:

http://www.palmbeachpost.com/business/content/business/epaper/2008/03/20/a1d_ferc_0320.html

3. *March 20, Washington Post* – (International) **Coal unable to fill world's burning appetite.** Long considered an abundant, reliable, and relatively cheap source of energy, coal is suddenly in short supply and high demand worldwide. An untimely confluence of bad weather, flawed energy policies, low stockpiles, and voracious growth in Asia's appetite has driven international spot prices of coal up by 50 percent or more in the past five months, surpassing the escalation in oil prices. In the U.S., the boom in coal exports and prices has helped lower the trade deficit. The value of coal exports, which account for 2.5 percent of all U.S. exports, grew by 19 percent last year, to \$4.1 billion, the National Mining Association said. An even bigger increase is expected this year. Meeting rising demand will prove difficult. To maintain its role as the world's producer of last resort, the U.S. will need to make major investments in mines, railways, and ports. "We're at a point where we're running through the capacity," said a coal analyst at Friedman, Billings, Ramsey Group. He compares the coal market to the oil market. For coal, he added, "it is unprecedented."

Source: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/23719312/>

4. *March 19, Reuters* – (Tennessee) **Firefighters battle Tennessee oil well blaze.** An eastern Tennessee oil and natural gas well erupted in flames sparked by a pickup truck Wednesday morning, said the owner of the well's operator, Walden Resources. Firefighters were keeping the blaze in Oliver Springs, Tennessee, contained while a crew from oil field firefighting company Wild Well Control Inc. of Houston was flying to the site. The fire could be seen from miles away. A spokesperson for the state's Environmental and Conservation Department said an interceptor trench had been dug to contain oil coming from the well and booms were in place to prevent it from reaching a nearby creek. The owner of Walden Resources said the drilling crew hit natural gas Tuesday afternoon, but a blowout prevention device failed and gas began flowing uncontrolled from the well. Oil began flowing from the well later Tuesday. The blaze was ignited Wednesday morning while crews were trying to cap the well, he said. Either the truck's engine drew in gas and set off the blaze or the engine backfired.

Source:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20080319/us_nm/tennessee_oilwell_fire_dc;_ylt=AllgMwu f5..AI82.vLHzi2sWIr0F

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Chemical Industry Sector

5. *March 20, ChemITC* – (National) **ChemITC coordinates chemical sector participation in Cyber Storm II.** The Chemical Information Technology Center (ChemITC) of the American Chemistry Council (ACC) facilitated the participation of 10 chemical companies in the largest cyber security exercise ever organized – the Department of Homeland Security's Cyber Storm II. Conducted by the DHS National Cyber Security Division (NCSA), Cyber Storm II brought together participants from federal, state and local governments, critical infrastructure sectors and the international community to examine and validate incident response and coordination capabilities in the event of a multi-sector coordinated attack on the global cyber infrastructure. Cyber Storm II provided an excellent opportunity for participating chemical companies to test their incident response and crisis communication processes, and identify areas where improvement is needed. "Cyber Storm II allowed participating companies to examine how well they engage their corporate processes and resources, as well as resources available at the sector level, across other critical infrastructure sectors and with government agencies during a simulated, large-scale coordinated cyber attack." According to the managing director of ACC's Chemical Products and Technology Division, Cyber Storm II is expected to reveal important lessons at all levels of information sharing during crisis conditions, both within individual companies as well as when companies need to escalate communication to the sector level and engage entities outside the chemical sector.

Source: <http://www.earthtimes.org/articles/show/chemitc-coordinates-chemical-sector-participation-in-cyber-storm-ii,320714.shtml>

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Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste Sector

6. *March 20, San Francisco Chronicle* – (National) **Plan to change nuclear labs draws skepticism.** Long-range plans to transform the nation's complex of nuclear weapons laboratories and bomb-building plants drew a crowd of anti-nuclear activists and a few supporters to a public hearing Wednesday in Livermore, California. The hearing was called by officials of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), which has drawn up a 1,600-page environmental impact statement describing its plans, and is presenting the essentials at communities across the country linked to the weapons complex. More than 50 speakers argued against the proposed realignment of functions at a dozen weapons-related facilities in the U.S. The director of the Lawrence Livermore lab supported an NNSA spokesperson's description of the program as a "proposal for making the nuclear weapons complex smaller, safer, more secure, and more responsive so we can better meet our national security requirements." A nuclear engineer who consults with Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory argued that the entire plan – which he maintained would cost \$10 billion to \$20 billion – means only another attempted reorganization. It would mean little until the agency adopts an entirely new national nuclear weapons policy, he said.
Source: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/03/20/BAD1VMRF5.DTL>
7. *March 20, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* – (Pennsylvania) **Armstrong County residents accept deal with ARCO in nuclear plants case.** After 16 years and millions of pages of litigation, some 240 Armstrong County residents who say they got cancer from former nuclear fuels plants have accepted a \$27.5 million settlement from one of two companies they sued in 1994. Atlantic Richfield Co. agreed to pay that amount to residents in and around Apollo and Parks Township, where the plants were once operated by the Nuclear Materials and Equipment Corp. (NUMEC). A U.S. district judge signed off on the agreement on Tuesday. Litigation continues against Babcock & Wilcox Co., the other defendant that operated NUMEC. The case against the two companies involves about 240 personal injury claims, 60 wrongful death and survival claims, and 120 property damage claims arising from home values that dropped to almost nothing.
Source: <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/08080/866539-54.stm>
8. *March 19, Press-Enterprise* – (California) **Officer finds box containing radioactive material in parking garage.** A parking control officer found an ice chest-size box containing industrial radioactive material Wednesday morning in the parking garage of the Carousel Mall in San Bernardino. Police cordoned off the parking structure while firefighters called a Riverside company to retrieve its equipment. The plastic yellow box contained a radioactive check source device, said a San Bernardino City Fire Department official. Symbols on the outside of the box indicated it contained radioactive material. The device contained Cesium 137. He said the Cesium appeared to be properly packaged in metal inside the plastic container, so the risk to anyone coming within about ten feet for a short time "is the equivalent of a few dental x-rays." He said he found a packing slip inside the box that indicated it belonged to a company in Riverside. He

would not name the company.

Source:

http://www.pe.com/localnews/inland/stories/PE_News_Local_D_webbbox.213012e.html
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Defense Industrial Base Sector

9. *March 20, Aviation Week* – (National) **Aegis ships to get PAC-3 missile.** A draft request for proposals could be released as soon as April for a new sea-based missile that would provide U.S. Navy combatant commanders with short- and medium-range tactical ballistic missile defense capabilities. Lockheed Martin recently completed a year-long feasibility study commissioned by the Navy demonstrating the ability of its Patriot Advance Capability-3 (PAC-3) Missile Segment Enhancement missile to be integrated onto an Aegis ship. According to a Lockheed engineer, the PAC-3 requires only slight modifications to be suitable for the Navy, including software changes for a different launch profile and an S-band communications link module.

Source:

http://www.aviationweek.com/aw/generic/story_generic.jsp?channel=aerospacedaily&id=news/PAC3032008.xml&headline=Aegis%20Ships%20To%20Get%20PAC-3%20Missile

10. *March 20, Navy Times* – (National) **CG gets fresh start with new ships, aircraft.** After a “rough couple of years” for Coast Guard acquisitions, the lifesaving service will “turn the corner” this year when it accepts the first of its advanced new ships and aircraft, a top acquisitions official said Thursday, and get into a balance that will let the service quickly replace its aging fleet. The Coast Guard’s first C-130J and HC-144A search and rescue aircraft are on schedule to enter the fleet around summer. “We’re no longer searching for people, we’ll just be rescuing people with the sensors we’ve got on these things,” the official said. Beyond its new manned aircraft, the Coast Guard in 2008 plans to begin taking more steps along its new path to adding an unmanned aerial vehicle. Commanders have sent a “letter of interest” to the Navy to begin testing the Fire Scout unmanned helicopter for Coast Guard operations, and service engineers are testing a Predator UAV in Florida to see how it handles maritime missions.

Source: http://www.navytimes.com/news/2008/03/navy_sas_cgacquisition_032008w/

11. *March 20, Associated Press* – (National) **Kennedy being towed to Philadelphia.** The deactivated aircraft carrier John F. Kennedy is on its way to a storage yard in Philadelphia. The carrier will remain in Philadelphia, mothballed, until the Navy decides whether to sell, scrap, or use the ship for another purpose. The Kennedy was retired in 2007, after 38 years of active service.

Source: http://www.navytimes.com/news/2008/03/ap_kennedy_031908/

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Banking and Finance Sector

12. *March 20, Reuters* – (New Jersey) **Man pleads innocent to stealing U.S. Treasury checks.** A man pleaded not guilty on Wednesday to stealing U.S. Treasury checks passing through Newark Liberty International Airport in New Jersey and using them to create millions of dollars in counterfeit checks. The man, of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, was arraigned on Wednesday in federal court in Newark, New Jersey. He was charged with paying baggage handlers to steal checks and smuggle them out of the airport. He then used those checks to produce counterfeit checks, generating a profit of more than \$2 million, prosecutors said. Two baggage handlers at the Newark airport have pleaded guilty for their roles in the case, which involved hiding stolen mail in their clothing and backpacks as they were unloading luggage from commercial aircraft.
Source:
http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20080319/us_nm/crime_treasury_dc;_ylt=AsIkSdDgoYJBPUAR1N9COkQWIr0F
13. *March 20, Computerworld* – (Maine) **Hannaford breach may hit Maine credit unions harder than TJX compromise.** The recently disclosed data breach at Hannaford Bros. Co. could have a significantly greater impact on Maine credit unions than last year's compromise at The TJX Companies Inc., the Maine Credit Union League has warned. In a statement issued Wednesday, the trade association representing the state's credit unions said that because the compromise happened at a major Maine retailer, more consumers in the state are likely to have been impacted than with the TJX breach. According to a card services manager at Synergent, a subsidiary of the credit union league that provides card processing services for Maine credit unions, a number of credit unions have already begun reissuing their entire card base as a result of the breach. Maine credit unions are expected to block and reissue over 100,000 new credit and debit cards as a result of the compromise, the credit union league said in its statement. The breach impacted all of Hannaford's 165 stores in New England and New York State, and 106 Sweetbay stores in Florida.
Source:
http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9069959&intsrc=hm_list
14. *March 20, Salem News* – (Massachusetts) **Latest high-tech scam hits Swampscott.** Just when you thought you heard them all, a new scam comes along mixing technology with the unscrupulous scammer on the other end of the telephone. It happened recently to several Swampscott, Massachusetts, residents, said police, who are now reminding bank customers to be more careful when giving out their personal information. Victims told police the ruse started with a pop-up advertisement on their computer. The ad purports to be from Bank of America, informing the customer they have an error on their online bank account and to call a toll-free number. "Once the resident calls this number, the person on the other line states he is from Bank of America and states he will assist in clearing up the error message," said a Swampscott detective. Residents end up giving up their Social Security number and date of birth, he said. He advised residents to be careful when giving any information out to a party they do not know. The bank states

they maintain physical, electronic and procedural safeguards to protect customer information.

Source: http://www.salemnews.com/punews/local_story_080064830.html

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Transportation Sector

15. *March 20, WYFF 4 Greenville* – (South Carolina) **Passengers describe terrifying moments on board 767.** An apparent problem with an air duct caused smoke to pour into the cabin of a Delta passenger plane on Wednesday afternoon, causing some terrifying moments for passengers and forcing the plane to make an emergency landing in the Upstate South Carolina. The Boeing 767 was filled with 259 passengers on a flight from Raleigh to Atlanta, but after the pilot reported smelling smoke in the cockpit, the crew made an emergency landing at GSP International Airport. Delta flight 1819 departed Raleigh at 3:16 p.m. and was scheduled to land in Atlanta at 4:07 p.m. Passengers said the plane was at 31,000 feet when they heard a pop and then the sound of grinding metal from the cargo area. Then they felt heat. One woman was burned by the hot air that was flowing into the plane. But the plane landed safely without incident and taxied to the B Concourse. Late Wednesday evening, investigators said that there was not a fire or an explosion. They said the incident was caused by heat coming out of an air conditioning duct that had collapsed. When the duct collapsed, insulation fell out and heat from one of the plane's engines then started blowing over debris, causing smoke, according to Delta officials. That was what triggered the alarms. Bomb sniffing dogs were brought in to inspect the plane and found nothing suspicious. The plane remained at GSP overnight and an investigation into the incident is continuing.
- Source: <http://www.wyff4.com/news/15645321/detail.html>

16. *March 19, Chicago Tribune* – (National) **Shorter training period for air-traffic controllers jeopardizes passengers, union says.** An effort to shave at least a year off the time it takes to train air-traffic controllers is jeopardizing the safety of the flying public and causing potentially deadly errors, the controllers union at a Chicago-area radar facility charged Wednesday. The Federal Aviation Administration immediately rejected the claims by the union representing controllers at Chicago Center in Aurora, which handles high-altitude air traffic over seven Midwestern states. The red flags raised by the union and the denials from the FAA threaten to leave air travelers confused and jittery, especially on the cusp of the busy spring and summer travel seasons. There have been recent reports of near-misses involving aircraft headed to or from O'Hare International and Midway Airports in Chicago. Chicago Center and FAA centers in Houston, New York and Miami are all working to trim the four to five years that it has traditionally taken to fully train a newly hired air-traffic controller down to a "more efficient" three years of training, said a FAA spokesman. The expedited process improves on old training methods by using more classroom and simulator training early on, he said. In addition, three years of material is being compressed into a five-month period under the streamlined training system, said the union. The condensed training program has resulted in mistakes in which both trainees and veteran controllers are allowing aircraft to fly closer to each other than FAA regulations allow, said the union

president at Chicago Center for the National Air Traffic Controllers Association. The FAA set a goal of no more than 19 controller errors at the facility for the entire fiscal year that will end September 30.

Source: http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/chi-faa-controllers_20mar20,1,6386041.story

17. *March 19, KGO 7 San Francisco* – (California) **New security crackdown for big rigs.** Law enforcement agencies from across the Bay Area of California are teaming up to hold random inspections of the trucks traveling on highways. About 19,000 trucks move in and out of the Port of Oakland every day. That makes it an ideal spot for random truck inspections, like the one Wednesday morning. The random stops help augment routine screenings done at CHP checkpoints along the highway system. The Oakland Police Department led Wednesday's multi-agency task force. Twice a month somewhere in Alameda County, California, a random checkpoint screens trucks for traffic safety violations, emissions violations, cargo registration and weapons of mass destruction. The port itself also screens all containers coming from outside the U.S. for radiation, and selects containers to test for explosives. More common violations found at the random checks are in the category of traffic safety.
- Source: <http://abclocal.go.com/kgo/story?section=news/local&id=6030338>

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Postal and Shipping Sector

Nothing to Report

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Agriculture and Food Sector

18. *March 20, Des Moines Register* – (National) **USDA says more tainted beef likely.** Federal inspectors are expected to find more beef contaminated with deadly E. coli bacteria this year because of a change in laboratory methods. The vice president of scientific affairs for the American Meat Institute warned a food industry conference in Nashville, Tennessee, this month that the number of positive tests for the bacteria could increase as much as 20 percent to 50 percent. But an increase in E. coli positives does not mean that there will be more contaminated meat reaching consumers, said a food microbiologist at Iowa State University. "It doesn't change what is in the marketplace. It just means the government is in a better position to find it if it is there," he said.
- Source: <http://www.desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080320/BUSINESS01/803200363/-1/NEWS04>
19. *March 20, MediaNews* – (California) **Mexico produce ban worries Central Coast strawberry growers.** A small pest delivered a hefty blow to Central Coast strawberry growers Wednesday, as growers learned of the Mexican government's decision to refuse all crops that are planted, refrigerated, or packed within a 1.9-mile radius of a reported

light brown apple moth. If the ban stays in effect through this year's strawberry season, it could cost Santa Cruz County growers about \$1.9 million in lost revenue, according to local estimates. Virtually no Santa Cruz County strawberries – by far the county's largest crop – would be allowed across the border. The news comes just three weeks before strawberry season ramps up. The issues arose Wednesday as, upon closer examination, agricultural officials realized the new monitoring rules issued by Mexico last week would be impossible to meet. As a result, all crops must meet the 1.9-mile rule. The California Strawberry Commission downplayed the effect of the restrictions Wednesday, and discouraged any idea of a glut on the U.S. strawberry market as Central Coast berries stay closer to home.

Source: http://www.montereyherald.com/news/ci_8635278

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Water Sector

20. *March 20, Associated Press* – (Colorado) **Officials: Salmonella outbreak in Colorado town may be tied to tap water.** State health officials warned residents of a southern Colorado town Wednesday to stop drinking and cooking with tap water because they said it might be linked to a salmonella outbreak. The state health department said 33 cases of salmonella have been confirmed and 46 other reports were being investigated in Alamosa, a city of 8,500 about 160 miles south of Denver. Officials said that the tap water tested positive for bacteria believed to be salmonella, but that the results had not been confirmed. City officials plan to start flushing and disinfecting the water system in the next few days, a process that could take a week or more. While the flush is under way, no municipal water should be used, even if it is boiled, they said. The first salmonella victim began showing symptoms around March 8, and state health officials became aware of the outbreak Friday, said the health department's chief medical officer. Officials tested city water on Monday, and the results showing bacteria in the water system came back Wednesday. Health officials are still investigating how the water was contaminated.

Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,339630,00.html>

21. *March 20, Christian Science Monitor* – (International) **Water shortages affect food, transit, security.** The United Nations (UN) reported this week that the world's glaciers are melting at "an alarming rate." Like reservoirs, glaciers store water and then release it at predictable rates, around which humans have formed communities and built economies. Agence France-Presse quotes the executive director of the UN Environment Program as saying: "Millions if not billions of people depend directly or indirectly on these natural water storage facilities for drinking water, agriculture, industry, and power generation during key parts of the year." As a result of shrinking glaciers, people will have to change their lifestyles, their farming, even move their homes, he says. Britain's Sunday Observer further quotes him as saying: "While I'm always cautious about 'water wars,' certainly the potential for water to become a trigger for more tension and, where there's already conflict, to exacerbate conflict is another issue that's not hypothetical." Water also complicates a shift from fossil fuels, researchers pointed out at the recent annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. In China,

drought has made it difficult to supply reservoir water for irrigation while also providing generating capacity for downstream hydropower dams. Reuters reports: “The frequency of both the droughts and floods that regularly batter China are expected to increase in a warmer world. And rural demands could compound the impact of short supplies, because China tends to time releases of water to suit the needs of farmers rather than power companies.”

Source: <http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/0320/p17s01-sten.html>

22. *March 19, Wisconsin State Journal* – (Wisconsin) **Increased water utility security installed.** Madison’s drinking water wells and reservoirs are now protected by a \$485,000 security system, including cameras at 32 sites, purchased with a grant from the Homeland Security program. The mayor said, “This new system will provide us with real-time surveillance of critical water utility facilities, providing an additional level of security for the community.” Security has been one of a number of concerns the troubled Madison Water Utility has faced in the past two years, including the mishandling of an attempted break-in at a water tower that went unreported to police or the state Department of Natural Resources. Now, the utility will be able to monitor all of its wells, water towers, and reservoirs with a system that will give an operator a continuous view of activity at each site on a large video display panel at the utility’s control center. The cameras will provide 24-hour surveillance, and the system also features an alarm notification that allows for quick decisions as a break-in or other situation is unfolding. Such an early warning system will be a deterrent to vandals and others intent on damaging utility property, water officials said. “We had alarms on the doors before that would go off,” said the utility’s head engineer. “But we had no way of verifying if it was a false alarm or something that needed investigating.”

Source: <http://www.madison.com/wsj/home/local/index.php?ntid=277881>

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Public Health and Healthcare Sector

23. *March 20, Los Angeles Times* – (International) **Heparin contaminant identified.** Hypersulfated chondroitin sulfate, a compound related to a common nutritional supplement has been identified as the contaminant in heparin, a blood-thinning drug, imported from China that sickened hundreds of frail patients in the U.S. and is suspected in a number of deaths, federal officials said Wednesday. The substance mimics heparin in standard safety tests and may have been deliberately substituted for the genuine compound to boost middlemen’s profits. It could also have been added through a mishap or misguided experiment. Because of difficulties in back-checking, it is unclear whether Food and Drug Administration officials will ever know for sure. The FDA and the heparin manufacturer, Baxter Healthcare Corp., said sophisticated testing identified the contaminant as hypersulfated chondroitin sulfate. Chondroitin sulfate, which is made from animal cartilage, is an ingredient in dozens of nutritional supplements marketed to promote healthy joints and to help people trying to cope with arthritis. On a molecular level, it is related to heparin. However, the FDA’s deputy commissioner said hypersulfated chondroitin sulfate was “not an approved drug in the United States, nor should it be present in heparin.”

Source: <http://www.latimes.com/news/printedition/asection/la-na-fda20mar20,1,4695849.story>

24. *March 19, USA Today* – (National) **‘Old blood’ may be risky after surgery.** Old blood may be bad blood, a study says today in the New England Journal of Medicine. Researchers at the Cleveland Clinic found that heart surgery patients who got transfusions of blood that was more than two weeks old fared worse than those who received newer blood. Researchers have long known that blood degrades over time, which is why the Food and Drug Administration does not allow it to be stored for more than 42 days – although with constant blood shortages throughout the country, it often is used within several days of being donated. As blood grows older, it loses power to bring oxygen to tissues. “What we found was that patients who receive older blood don’t do as well,” the study’s author said. In fact, the researchers write in the journal, “the relative risk of postoperative death is increased by 30 percent in patients given blood that has been stored for more than two weeks. These results may appear to suggest that blood should be classified as outdated earlier than current recommendations.”

Source: http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2008-03-19-old-blood_N.htm

25. *March 19, Computerworld* – (Indiana) **Former patient charged in computer theft from Indianapolis VA center.** A onetime patient at the Richard Roudebush Veterans Affairs medical center in Indianapolis has been charged with stealing a hospital computer last November that contained confidential information on nearly 12,000 veterans. But the missing computer itself has still not been recovered. Two desktop PCs, one laptop, two monitors, and a printer were stolen from the facility over the Veterans Day weekend. One of the desktops contained records of patients who were treated at the hospital. The data, which is believed to have been encrypted, included patients’ names, Social Security numbers, and dates of birth. A search of the suspect’s home did not turn up the laptop with the confidential information on it, and investigators did not find the other computers and peripherals also stolen from the hospital in November. The theft continued a string of such incidents disclosed by the VA following the loss of a laptop and hard disk drive containing personal data on more than 26.5 million veterans in May 2006. Similarly, in August 2006 – at the height of the uproar over the May 2006 breach – the VA disclosed that Unisys Corp., a subcontractor hired to assist in insurance collections for VA medical centers in Pittsburgh, had reported a missing computer containing personal data on more than 16,000 veterans. In January 2007, an IT specialist at a VA medical center in Birmingham, Alabama, reported as missing a hard disk containing personal data on more than 250,000 veterans and 1.3 million medical providers.

Source:

http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9069899&intsrc=news_ts_head

26. *March 19, Associated Press* – (National) **UN: Indonesia failing in bird flu fight.** Efforts to contain bird flu are failing in Indonesia, increasing the possibility that the virus may mutate into a deadlier form, the leading United Nations veterinary health body warned. The H5N1 bird flu virus is entrenched in 31 of the country’s 33 provinces

and will cause more human deaths, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said in a statement released late Tuesday. “I am deeply concerned that the high level of virus circulation in birds in the country could create conditions for the virus to mutate and to finally cause a human influenza pandemic,” FAO’s chief veterinary officer said. FAO’s sharp warning comes amid a flurry of bird flu outbreaks across the region. Chinese officials earlier this week announced the H5N1 virus was responsible for killing birds in poultry markets in the southern city of Guangzhou. Meanwhile, India last week confirmed a fresh poultry outbreak near Calcutta. The country has been battling the virus since January, resulting in the death or slaughter of some 4 million birds.

Source: http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5iHvsX7x_0-zl9F7ydDjEt38m5qUAD8VGBJJG0

Government Facilities Sector

Nothing to Report

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Emergency Services Sector

27. *March 20, Des Moines Register* – (Iowa) **New Polk response system urged after plant explosion.** Polk County officials are looking for money to pay for a new emergency-notification system after a self-review of their response to a chemical plant explosion in October. The current system is “not as robust as is needed for urgent messaging,” said Polk County’s emergency management coordinator. A new system would cost between \$50,000 and \$75,000 for its initial startup, and would likely cost \$25,000 per year afterward. The proposed system would be similar to those recently used at Iowa State University and the University of Northern Iowa, and grant money could cover the first-year cost. Along with a recommendation to establish the notification system, the “after-action” review of the October 29 fire at the Barton Solvents facility suggested immediate, intermediate, and long-term goals for future emergency situations, but was not the conclusive long-term review that federal authorities and the company said would take at least a year to complete.

Source:

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080320/NEWS01/803200375>

28. *March 20, Spectrum* – (Utah) **Officials stress preparedness.** A recent earthquake in Nevada, the potential for flooding in southern Utah, and fears of a flu pandemic have emergency preparedness at the top of mind in many circles. A representative of the Southwest Utah Public Health Department said preparedness for such unexpected interruptions is important to businesses, too. “Historically, the businesses that are prepared are the ones that survive,” he told members of the St. George Area Chamber of Commerce on Wednesday.

Source:

29. *March 19, Honolulu Star-Bulletin* – (Hawaii) **Hospitals react to mock attack.** A mock anthrax attack brought hundreds of Hawaii hospital workers together recently to test procedures for dealing with bioterrorism. Twelve hospitals of different sizes across the state participated in the exercise, conducted by the state Department of Health and the Healthcare Association of Hawaii. About ten percent of the medical staff at the hospitals was involved, said the association's director of emergency services. The purpose was to test and improve the state's ability to distribute medication to hospital workers in a potential anthrax threat or other disaster, such as avian flu or plague. Activation of the Strategic National Stockpile was simulated to test the receipt, storage, tracking, and delivery of medication to participating hospitals and staff.
Source: <http://starbulletin.com/2008/03/19/news/story11.html>
30. *March 18, Herald News* – (Massachusetts) **Public safety agencies to conduct emergency drill at UMD campus.** State, local, and regional public safety agencies will gather at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth campus Thursday morning for a "full-scale" emergency drill. "This exercise is an essential step as regional response agencies and the university prepare to efficiently handle emergencies requiring multi-agency coordination," said the vice president and exercise program manager of the Strategic Emergency Group, an emergency management services firm. The drill will include police, fire, and medical crews and vehicles, and may include a helicopter. Included in the drill will be the Southeast Regional Homeland Security Regional Advisory Council – of which UMass Dartmouth and area municipal public safety agencies are a part – the state Department of Public Safety, state police, and the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency.
Source: <http://www.heraldnews.com/homepage/x691151455>

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Information Technology

31. *March 20, IDG News Service* – (International) **Hacker pleads guilty to computer fraud.** A 21-year-old Florida man could face up to 10 years in prison in the U.S. after pleading guilty to installing advertising software on PCs located around Europe without permission. He is scheduled for sentencing May 28 in U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida. He could also face a fine of up to US\$250,000. The man's plea culminates a wide-ranging international investigation that started with London's Metropolitan Police Computer Crime Unit in December 2006, according to an FBI news release. Around that time, U.S.-based Newell Rubbermaid, whose products include Sharpie markers and plastic food-storage containers, reported their European computer network had been hacked. One other European-based company also complained. That launched a law enforcement effort called "Bot Roast II" that included the U.S. Secret Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Finland National Bureau of Investigation, and other local U.S. agencies. The man was indicted by a federal grand jury in November last year for computer fraud and conspiracy to commit computer

fraud. He and others infected hundreds of computer in Europe with advertising software, or adware, using botnets, which are networks of hacked computers. His botnet was located within Newell Rubbermaid's network.

Source:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/pcworld/20080320/tc_pcworld/143620;_ylt=AqXAodakYDM0DtpGGk9mMZuDzdAF

32. *March 19, Computerworld* – (International) **Hackers vs. Windows, Mac, Linux next week in big-money contest.** The security conference that last year made headlines with a hacking challenge whose winner walked away with a \$10,000 prize will reprise the contest next week – this time with more money at stake, the contest's organizer said today. CanSecWest, which will run from March 26 to 28 in Vancouver, British Columbia, will feature a second "PWN to Own" contest that pits researchers against a trio of laptops armed with the latest versions of Windows Vista Ultimate, Mac OS X 10.5, and the Ubuntu Linux distribution, said the conference's organizer. The first to hack one of the laptops by exploiting a remote preauthentication code-execution vulnerability in a default service on the notebook's operating system will take home the machine and a \$10,000 prize. 3Com Corp.'s TippingPoint unit and its Zero Day Initiative bug-bounty program are providing the cash, as they did last year.

Source:

http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9069818&intsrc=hm_list

Internet Alert Dashboard

To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US-CERT at soc@us-cert.gov or visit their Website: <http://www.us-cert.gov>.

Information on IT information sharing and analysis can be found at the IT ISAC (Information Sharing and Analysis Center) Website: <https://www.it-isac.org/>.

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Communications Sector

Nothing to Report

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Commercial Facilities Sector

Nothing to Report

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National Monuments & Icons Sector

33. *March 20, Anchorage Daily News* – (Alaska) **Vandals deface veterans memorial.**

Vandals dumped red paint on a downtown veterans memorial Wednesday morning in what police suspect was a symbolic act of protest on the fifth anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Police are investigating the vandalism as a crime, and the responsible party could be facing charges of malicious destruction of property or felony criminal mischief, depending on cleanup costs, he said. The statue was cleaned off by early afternoon, with only a hint of a reddish hue staining the green metal shaped into a World War II soldier holding a carbine.

Source: <http://www.adn.com/anchorage/story/350582.html>

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Dams Sector

34. *March 19, Southeast Missourian*— (Missouri) **Governor asks for quick federal help for southeast Missouri counties.** Missouri's governor is asking the federal government to call this week's flooding in 70 Missouri counties a "major disaster," and asking them to send financial assistance as soon as possible. He wrote a letter to the Federal Emergency Management Agency today asking the agency to expedite federal funds for flood-related expenses. Levee breaches and overtopping became the focus of area emergency operations today as the accumulated runoff from more than 12 inches of rain pushed its way downstream. And the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, along with other federal and state agencies including the U.S. Coast Guard, have sent in people to help with the battle against the flood waters.

Source:

<http://www.semissourian.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080319/NEWS01/186307950/-1/news01>

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